

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KABUL 02685 201111Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /028 W
-----201300Z 023933 /53

R 200730Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2294

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THERAN

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2685

E.O. 11652: GDS

GCUGS: PINT, PGOV, AF

SUBJ: FUNERAL POLITICS

1. SUMMARY. THE DEATH IN ROME OF THE ANCIENT SHAH WALI KHAN, A RETIRED MARSHAL AND SENIOR MEMBER OF THE RULING MOHAMADZAI CLAN, WAS OBSERVED IN OBSEQUIES HERE WHICH CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS "TRIBAL RITES" -- DESPITE PRESIDENT DAOUD'S EXPLICIT STATEMENT THAT NATIONAL CONCERNS MUST OUTRANK FAMILY CONCERNS AND HIS INDICATION THAT HE CAME TO PRAISE A NATIONAL HERO AND NOT AN UNCLE. END SUMMARY.

2. SHAH WALI KHAN DIED IN ROME ON (OR ABOUT) APRIL 14. HIS OBSEQUIES DREW HIS KINSMEN IN KABUL TOGETHER -- OR AT LEAST INTO PROXIMITY -- AT A TIME WHEN THERE IS DESSENSATION REPORTED AMONG THE "AFGHAN ESTABLISHMENT". (DEE KABUL 2530)

3. SHAH WALI KHAN WAS A RETIRED MARSHAL OF THE ARMY WHEN HE DIED AT 96, A MAN OFFICIALLY REVERED BY THE AFGHAN REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT FOR HIS ROLE IN LEADING AN ARMY IN 1929 TO DEPOSE THE TAJIK USURPER, KNOWN AS THE BACHA-E-SAQAO ("THE SON OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KABUL 02685 201111Z

THE WATER CARRIER"), WHO HAD SEIZED KABUL AND SOUGHT TO RULE AFGHANISTAN AFTER REVOLUTION TOPPLED KING AMANULLAH. SHAH WALI KHAN SERVED HIS COUNTRY -- AND HIS FAMILY, SINCE IN AFGHAN HISTORY THE TWO ARE ALMOST INDISTINGUISHABLE -- AS REGENT AND AMBASSADOR TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES. HE DIED IN EXILE IN ROME, AFTER A LATE MARCH STROKE.

4. WHILE HIS SON ABDUL WALI -- A PROMINENT RPKAL OF DAOUD'S -- WAS IN JAIL AFTER THE JULY 1973 COUP, SHAH WALI WAS UNDER VIRTUAL HOUSE ARREST UNTIL HE AND HIS SON WERE ALLOWED TO EXILE THEMSELVES FROM AFGHANISTAN ON OCTOBER 22, 1975. SHAH WALI WAS A VICTIM OF DYNASTIC POLITICS: HIS FATHER HAD TWO WIVES, ONE OF WHOM PRODUCED FORMER KING NADER, SHAH MAHMOUD ZHAZI AND SHAH WALI HIMSELF; ENOTHER WIFE PRODUCED MOHAMMAD AZIZ (FATHER OF PRESIDENT DAOUD AND FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR NAIM), AND AZIZ'S BROTHER HASHEM -- WHO SERVED AS HIS DEPHEW (ACTUALLY "HAFL NEPHEW") KING ZAHIR'S PRIME MINISTER AND, ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE "NEVER WASTED AN OPPORTUNITY TO HUMILIATE HIS MAJESTY". HASHEM WAS IN TURN THE MENTOR OF DAOUD, SON OF HIS ONLY FULL BROTHER.

5. THUS DOES HAREM POLITICS OF THE PAST CENTURY INTRUDE ITSELF INTO MODERN AFGHANISTAN. SHAH WALI WAS VICTIM TOO OF HIS OWN SON'S AUTHORITY AND COMPETENCE, AS NOTED ABOVE GENERAL ABDUL WALI IS THOUGHT BY MANY TO BE DAOUD'S NATURAL" REPLACEMENT AS CLAN HEAD AND NATIONAL PRESIDENT. WHILE IN JAIL FROM JULY OF 1973 UNTIL OCTOBER OF 1975, BY SOME ACCOUNTS, ABDUL WALI WAS BRUTALLY TEATED. HE WAS WITH HIS FATHER IN ROME AT THE TIME OF THE OLD MAN'S DEATH -- EXILES ALL, ALONG WITH FORMER KING ZAHIR, WHO IS GENERAL ABDUL WALI'S FATHER-IN-LAW (AND FIRST COUSIN).

6. SHAH WALI WAS BURIED IN ROME, MANY SPECULATE BECAUSE DAOUD DID NOT WANT ABDUL WALI RETURNING HERE TO SEE TO HIS FATHER'S BURIAL. OBSEQUIES HERE HOWEVER WERE LENGTHY AND FORMAL: TWO MORNINGS OF PRAYER AT KABUL'S LARGEST MOSQUE, AT WHICH PRESIDENT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KABUL 02685 201111Z

DAOUD STAYED DURING ONE TO ACCEPT CONDOLENCES (HE HAD RETURNED FROM THE SOVIET UNION ONLY THE PREVIOUS DAY); AFTERNOON PRAYER SERVICE FOR "RANKING LADIES"; A BOOK OPEN FOR THE OFFICIAL CONDOLENCE STATEMENTS OF AMBASSADORS; AND MILITARY HONOR GUARDS FOR PUBLIC CEREMONIES.

7. THOUGH HANDLED THROUGHOUT AS A MILITARY AFFAIR -- BEFITTING A LATE HERO -- THE SHAH WALI KHAN OBSEQUIES INEVITABLY INVOLVED MEMBERS OF HIS CLOSE AND EMINENT FAMILY. IN ADDITION TO DAOUD, THE PRESIDENT'S BROTHER NAIM TOOK PART, AS DID GHAZIS AND SERAJES AND RAFIQS AND TARZIS -- THE BRIGHTEST STARS IN THE FIRMAMENT OF FAMILIES FORMING CLAN MOHAMMADZAI.

8. DAOUD TOOK THE OCCASION TO SAY, PUBLICLY: "ONE SHOULD KNOW THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS ARE TWO DIFFERENT ISSUES WHICH SHOULD NOT BE MIXED -- AND THE NATIONAL INTERESTS SHOULD REST ABOVE ALL". HE WENT ON TO ADD WORDS TO THE EFFECT THAT HE CAME TO HONOR A NATIONAL HERO, WHO ONLY INCIDENTALLY WAS HIS UNCLE. AFGHANS REMAIN TO BE

CONVINCED, NEVERTHELESS, THAT DAOUD IS ABLE TO PUT GREAT
DISTANCE TWTWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY -- NO MATTER HOW HARD
HE MIGHT TRY. THIS REMAINS A TRIBAL COUNTRY, AND THE SHAH WALI
KHAN MERORIAL SERVICES WERE ESSENTIALLY TRIBAL RITES.
ELIOT

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEATHS, STATE FUNERALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977KABUL02685
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770137-0183
Format: TEL
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770439/aaaabhil.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7b922aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2751818
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FUNERAL POLITICS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AF, (KHAN, SHAH WALI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7b922aa2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009